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1874
RITUAL REVISION

A LETTER

TO THE

VENERABLE EDWARD BICKERSTETH, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF BUCKINGHAM

AND

PROLOCUTOR OF THE LOWER HOUSE OF THE CONVOCATION
OF THE PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY

BY THE

RIGHT HON. JOHN G. HUBBARD, M.P.

LONDON

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TO THE
VENERABLE ARCHDEACON BICKERSTETH,

Prolocutor of the Lower House of Convocation.

MY DEAR ARCHDEACON,—

At the Brighton Church Congress you, as Prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, expressed a desire “that Convocation should be strengthened by the opinions of the attached Laity of the Church,” and this intimation I must plead as my apology for offering the following remarks.

Being neither a scholar, a theologian, nor a lawyer, I have no pretension to expect that the same weight will be attached to my thoughts on Ritual which is due to those of others better qualified to speak on such a subject. Yet feeling a deep interest in the questions which are now under consideration, I submit the conclusions to which I have been led by a careful study of the conflicting arguments and evidence, aided also by the experience derived from a three years’ participation in the labours of the Royal Commission on Ritual. I shall not reiterate the feeling of deference under which I write, but I beg to be clearly understood as

expressing my opinions subject to correction by superior authority.

Convocation, and by this word I imply the two Houses of the Province of Canterbury, and the Convocation of York, has, by "Letters of Business," been summoned by the Crown to consider and report upon the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer. Convocation has accepted, and has already entered upon its task; and it is needless to assert the immense importance of its concurrence in effecting such changes or explanations of the Rubrics as may terminate the painful and harassing dissensions which destroy the peace and impede the action of the Church. The differences of opinion and diversities of practice which it is important to reconcile and remove may all occur to the mind in a review of the "Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion;" but before entering on this review, I desire to submit some rules which, in my judgment, should guide the revision of the Rubrics.

1. The text of the Prayer Book should be maintained in its integrity, and not be tampered with either directly, or indirectly through changes in the Rubrics.

2. The Rubrics should be touched only where a diversity of practice indicates that they require explanation or alteration in order to ensure uniformity, or to sanction a diversity of practice.

3. The decision of Convocation should not be embarrassed by admitting in certain Ritual observances a doctrinal significance arbitrarily attached to them, and by reason of that assumed significance fiercely attacked by one party, and as resolutely defended by the other.

4. The essential uniformity of a National Church should

not be exchanged for the variableness of a petty congregationalism, and the concurrent approval of a congregation and their clergy be allowed to legalise any local diversity of practice.

It is greatly to be lamented that the issue of the Royal License and Letters of Business from the Crown should have been made the occasion of impugning the capacity of Convocation for the task assigned to it, and of disparaging it as imperfectly representing the clergy, and as being, therefore, disqualified for the work of legislation. Undoubtedly Convocation might be a larger body, and might be elected by a larger constituency, but it by no means follows that it would be materially altered either in ability or character by the proposed reform. Convocation comprises men eminent for their learning and their loyalty, experienced also in their important office, and as a body well deserving the confidence of Churchmen. It has before it the arduous duty of initiating legislation to be effected with the concurrence of a House of Commons, comprising members of conflicting religious communities. A House so constituted is avowedly unfitted for the discussion of religious questions, yet its co-operation is indispensable, and it has a right, therefore, to expect that the proposals submitted for its concurrence shall have been framed with regard both to the maintenance of order indispensable to the existence of a Church, and to the reasonable liberty claimed by its individual members. The proposals of Convocation will be entitled to the ready acceptance of Parliament if they carry with them the general assent of Churchmen. Convocation may divest itself of all prejudice and partial affections, yet it can hardly be that the decisions which are to terminate

strife will invariably satisfy both the contending parties. Assuming, however, that both parties are loyal to the Church, it may be hoped that whatever adjustment may be arrived at will meet with a general, if not a cheerful, acquiescence.

I remain, my dear Archdeacon,

Very sincerely yours,

JOHN GELLIBRAND HUBBARD,

RITUAL REVISION.

THE POSITION OF THE CELEBRANT.

“ The Table . . . shall stand in the Body of the Church or in the Chancel . . . And the Priest, standing at the North-Side of the Table, shall say

“ When the Priest, standing before the Table, hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the Bread before the people, and take the Cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth.”

THE adjustment of the controversy touching the position of the Priest at the celebration of the Holy Communion has been unhappily delayed by the eagerness with which advocates, on either side, regardless of historic facts, have urged their peculiar interpretations ; and in particular by the fantastic argument “ that the north side of the table was a ritual synonym for the ancient rubrical expression ‘ *in dextro cornu altaris* ;’ the dexter corner being that which would be so called with reference to that of which it was a part, and thus ‘ north side ’ obviously means the northern part of the western side of the Altar.” A reference to the history of the Rubrics effectively disposes of this theory.

The Rubrics of 1549 ran—

“ The Priest, standing humbly afore the midst of the Altar, &c. &c.” The Altar then stood with its ends north and south, and the Priest officiated at the west side, and the west side only, during the service.

With the year 1550 began the destruction of “ Altars ”

and the substitution of "Tables." The Letter of the Council, dated November 1550, mentions that "Altars within the most part of the 'Churches' were already taken down;" and it was in view of this substitution of Table for Altar that the Rubrics of 1552 direct that—

"The Table . . . shall stand in the Body of the Church or in the Chancel . . . and the Priest, standing at the North-Side of the Table, shall say, &c." Is it probable, is it possible, that the authors of the Rubrics of 1552, who had just destroyed Altars throughout the churches of this realm, should indicate the Priest's position at the Table by a reference, in antiquarian language, to the Altar which had been destroyed?

The interpretation of the Rubric must be in harmony and not at variance with historical facts.

The Table being placed in the Body of the Church or Chancel, with its ends east and west, the Priest standing at the North-Side would be also standing "before the Table," and in this position he would officiate throughout the service.

Under Archbishop Laud's influence the Convocations of York and Canterbury declared, in 1640 (7th Canon), that the Table being by that time rightly placed "in most Cathedral and some Parochial Churches," it was fit and convenient that all Churches do conform to their example, and place the Table "sideway under the east window" (*i.e.* altarwise); but in 1641 Laud's work was undone by an order of the House of Commons, "that the Communion Table be removed forthwith from the east end of the Church, or Chapel, or Chancel, into some other convenient place."

With the Restoration came a reaction from the Puritan disarrangement, but neither Wren nor Cosin were able to transform the words "north side" into "north part," and the Rubric of 1552 re-appeared unaltered in the Prayer Book of 1662. In that Book, however, the Rubric prefixed to the Consecration Prayer was altered from "*Then the*

Priest, standing up, shall say as followeth” into “*When the Priest, standing before the Table, hath, &c. &c.*”

The addition of these words made no necessary difference in the position of the Priest; for assuming the Table to stand east and west, he still stood at the “north side,” and he also stood “before the Table.”

Since 1662 no change has been made in the Rubrics of the Liturgy, but a very general change has been made in the position of the Table, which now invariably stands north and south, except in the few cases in which the Table being a perfect square has four sides and no ends. So we have Rubrics adapting the position of the Priest to a supposed “tablewise” position of the Table, and we have the Table itself occupying an “altarwise” position. Clearly here is a necessity for a legislative or, at all events, a judicial adjustment.

The position of the celebrant is admitted to be a non-essential; but the adherents of the north and of the west sides attach much importance to the perpetuation of their respective practices, and there appears sufficient reason for admitting an alternative practice, and authorising either position.

A powerful argument in favour of this course lies in the improbability of either position being brought under judicial condemnation, should any fresh case be pleaded with the assistance of Counsel. Assume the impeachment of a Priest celebrating at the north (narrow) end of the Table. He clearly disobeys the order to stand “before the Table,” but he could protect himself and comply with the Rubric by moving the Table and placing it as it would have stood 300 years ago, with its ends east and west. Assume, on the other hand, the impeachment of a Priest for celebrating at the west side, before any tribunal bound to apply the law as already determined by the Final Court of Appeal. It would be pleaded against him that the Judicial Committee of the

Privy Council, in the case of *Hebbert v. Purchas*, decided that Mr. Purchas's practice of saying the Consecration Prayer, standing before the Table and looking eastward, was illegal; but it would be replied that Mr. Purchas had no Counsel and made no defence; and that the decision, valid as against him, is not conclusive in any other case; and it would be alleged, further, that the Purchas decision is not only *not law*, but is directly at variance with the Mackonochie decision, which *is law*. In that earlier case the Privy Council, after a trial elaborately argued upon both sides, decided that "Mr. Mackonochie had violated the Rubric by kneeling instead of standing during a part of the Consecration Prayer;" and they grounded their decision upon the words—"When the Priest, *standing before the Table*;" which, they say, apply to the whole sentence. The Priest, therefore, "for the ordering of the elements," taking the posture "*standing*," and the position "*before the Table*," can change neither posture nor position until the conclusion of the Consecration Prayer.

The Committee of the Privy Council, who tried Mr. Purchas, allege that in the Mackonochie case the "*posture*" and not the "*position*" was in question: that is quite true, but the rejoinder is, that the construction of the Rubric, which fixes the celebrant in a "*standing*" posture, and so precludes his "*kneeling*," equally precludes his "*walking*." Once let the minister "stand before the Table" looking east (as he is in some churches assumed legally to do by Mr. Purchas's judges), and it becomes impossible for him, consistently with the Rubric, as interpreted in the Mackonochie case, to leave that side of the Table until he releases himself by completing the Consecration.

A return to the perception of what is reverent and convenient has restored the Lord's Table to its original position; and so long as it there remains, the Rubrics regulating the

position of the Priest become in their entirety impracticable. The solution of the dilemma thus created would be readily effected by legalising either position ; and, indeed, no other course presents itself.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION.

“ Then shall this general Confession be made, in the name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion, by one of the Ministers ; both he and all the people kneeling humbly upon their knees, and saying :—

“ Then shall the Priest (or the Bishop, being present) stand up, and turning himself to the people, pronounce this Absolution.”

Judging from the public excitement upon this subject, and from the Memorials presented to Bishops and Archbishops, one might imagine that Confession meant, not the contrite avowal of sin, but the commission of some dire enormity, to which the party granting “ Absolution ” became an accomplice. It is, no doubt, possible that false teaching and spiritual tyranny might exist in connection with Confession and Absolution. We might be told that sins can only be forgiven through the medium of personal Absolution given by the Priest after particular Confession ; and the doctrine so enunciated might be enforced by a denial of the Holy Communion except as a sequel to previous private Confession. Assuming that such a doctrine may have been taught, I have never heard of its being practically enforced by such unwarrantable means. The recollection of spiritual tyranny exercised through the Confessional (although referring back in this country to very distant periods) is still sufficiently vivid to inflame the popular mind upon any provocation however slight ; but the surest way to avert any

mischief from a similar abuse of power, or from false teaching, in our own times, would be for those in authority not to echo an unreasoning and ignorant cry, but to point out how clearly and effectively the Church of England guards her members from the dangers to which members of the Roman Communion are exposed.

The Doctrine that every Christian requires the assistance of a Priest to search out the sins of his past life is one which practically denies the gift of baptismal grace. The Holy Spirit given to the regenerate is (unless repelled by wilful sin) their constant monitor and guide. He restrains the sinful impulse, rebukes the accomplished sin, inspires contrition, and keeps past sin in painful memory, until the soul, relieved by humble and sorrowful confession to God, finds comfort and peace through Absolution. The holiest of men offend continually, but Christ has provided, through His meritorious atonement, a continual means of recovery in the ministrations of His Church. The Church of England provides in her Order of Daily Prayer, and again in the Communion Service, forms of general Confession, to each of which is adapted a form of general Absolution. In the office for the "Visitation of the Sick" the sick person shall "be moved to make a special confession of his sins if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which Confession the Priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort:—'Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences. And by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.'"

This form of Absolution is also applicable after private

Confessions made in response to the Exhortation in the Communion Service:—"If any of you cannot quiet his own conscience . . . let him come to me or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word and open his grief, that by the ministry of God's Holy Word he may receive the benefit of Absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

The form of Absolution adapted to private and special Confessions is of necessity personal in its character, but the efficacy of the several forms is equal. The Priest in either case speaks in the Name of God and by His authority, and the pardon which he declares is effectual alike in each, upon the expressed condition that the sinner be "truly penitent for his sins and have a lively faith in God's mercy." The penitent who longs for the peace of conscious pardon will in solitude search out the sins of his past life, in solitude remorsefully confess them to the ever-ready ear of his Heavenly Father, and bringing the memory of them into the House of God, embrace them all in the general Confession, while with deep abasement he sends a cry for mercy to the Throne of God. So repenting, confessing, and believing he appropriates to himself the Absolution pronounced by the Priest, and as the words reach his ear, "He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His Holy Gospel," he feels that God, speaking by the mouth of His Minister, has indeed forgiven him.

All private Confession, including that of the sick, or of those troubled in mind, is made in the hearing of the Priest, and consists in the avowal of specific sins, and the Absolution pronounced by the Priest is consequently direct and personal; but, equally with the general Absolutions, it is declaredly given in Christ's Name, and by His authority, and its appli-

cation is limited to "those who truly repent and believe in Him." How true that repentance and belief may be God knoweth, but no Priest can know, and the Absolution the Priest declares is, therefore, necessarily conditional. And yet the stipulated proviso neither invalidates his Office nor nullifies the Absolution pronounced by him. Irresistible are the evidences that Christ, exercising Himself the power of Absolution, committed that power to His Apostles for transmission through the ministry of His Church to the end of time, and to the privileges provided for them in that ministry the faithful are continually invited.

Assuming the sufficiency of the general Confessions and Public Absolutions of the Church, especially with reference to those who may have been from their Baptism carefully brought up "to lead the rest of their lives according to that beginning," it must still be remarked that in all ages there have been persons inferior neither in holiness of life, nor in intellectual vigour, who have found, or thought they found, the practice of private Confession helpful to the attainment of yet higher degrees of holiness. Again, it must be obvious, that in dealing with the neglected, ignorant, and vicious population of our great cities, many of all ages must be met with, so cased in ignorance and steeped in sin that their whole moral nature needs to be dissected, and their darkened lives brought to the light of day, before they can be taught to understand the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. In such cases it is quite possible that special Confession to the Priest may afford the most effectual means towards enlightening the mind and converting the heart. And if it be found that through private Confession, and by the grace of Absolution, the depraved can be purified, and the pure become holier, who shall dare to deprive either class of their liberty of action? The attempt would be as futile as it would be profane.

If it appear that attempts are being made to render private Confession a compulsory rule, let them be counteracted, not by disparaging the ordinance, but by showing that remission of sins can be effectually obtained by duly using the ordinary ministrations of the Church.

WAFERS.

“ And to take away all occasion of dissension, and superstition, which any person hath or might have concerning the Bread and Wine, it shall suffice that the Bread be such as is usual to be eaten; but the best and purest Wheat Bread that conveniently may be gotten.

“ And if any of the Bread and Wine remain unconsecrated, the Curate shall have it to his own use.”

There are diversities which, touching matters either non-essential or only of partial or passing interest, may be admitted without serious detriment to the uniformity indispensable for unity, peace, and concord. Such, however, is not a diversity touching the Bread administered at Holy Communion. It ought not to be possible for a member of the Church of England to attend a celebration of the Holy Communion and be startled and shocked at being presented by any of her Clergy with some strange substance instead of the accustomed consecrated Bread. There is no other practice in the whole range of Ritual observance upon which uniformity is more obviously essential than in the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which is at once the highest means of grace and the most expressive bond of Christian fellowship. Archbishop Parker has been often referred to by the advocates of Wafers as an authority in favour of their use. Parker undoubtedly endorsed Queen Elizabeth's Injunctions, and in his Visitation Articles of 1563 enquired, “ 4, Item.

Whether they do use to minister the Communion in Wafer Bread according to the Queen's Majesty's Injunctions, or in common bread ;" but Parker, writing to Sir William Cecil in 1570, declared that "he had been moved in a matter not greatly material, but only obeying the Queen's Highness when he required the use of Wafer Bread," and adding, "I can soon alter my order." Parker, doubtful or indifferent as to whether Wafer Bread or Loaf Bread should be used, had, however, no doubt as to the scandal arising from conflicting usage, or he would not have written to Secretary Cecil :—

"Sir,—As you desired, I send you the form of the Bread used and was so appointed by my late Lord of London and myself, as we took it not disagreeable to the Injunction. And how so many Churches hath of late varied I cannot tell ; *except it be the practice of the common adversary the devil to make variance and dissension in the Sacrament of Unity.*"

The unity which Parker had at heart was, by the progress of events, attained in this matter by the general adoption not of Wafer Bread but of Loaf Bread ; and the question now is, whether the recently revived use of Wafers shall again "make variance and dissension in the Sacrament of Unity ?"

Let us consider the arguments in favour of Wafers. It is asserted that "Wafers are Bread of the best and purest species, for that they are made of wheaten flour and water."

The reply is, that starch and maccaroni are both of them made of wheaten flour and water, and yet neither starch nor maccaroni is *Bread*.

It is objected to Loaf Bread that it "is made with leaven and many other impurities, and that it crumbles to an inconvenient extent in the administration."

The answer is, that our Rubrics stipulate neither for Leavened nor Unleavened Bread, but they require bread "such as is usual to be eaten," or it would not be enjoined that "if any remain unconsecrated, the Curate shall have it to his own

use." Bread may or may not be baker's bread, it may be leavened, unleavened, or aërated, but it must be "Bread;" and there is no difficulty in procuring bread free from impurity and free from any tendency to excessive crumbling. A certain amount of crumbling may take place with any Bread that can be used, but reverence degenerates into superstition when, in order to avoid the risk of crumbling, the Clergy disregard Christ's own institution by inventing a safe substitute for the Bread which he gives us as His Body. They who thus act are really adopting the argument of the Church of Rome, which pleads reverence in its justification when,—to avert the risk of spilling a drop of the consecrated Wine,—it deprives the Laity of the Chalice of Christ's cleansing Blood. Some of our Clergy subject Loaf Bread to pressure, which destroys its texture and natural appearance, and deliver it to the communicant in the disguise of a thin lozenge of paste. Surely it is more reverent that the Loaf Bread untampered with should be divided into small cubes easily conveyed to the mouth, with the fingers or from the palm of the hand, than in this elaborated form.

Neither by these devices nor by the use of Wafers would the irreverence be remedied which is said to attach to the use of Loaf Bread; for unless the use of Wafers were made compulsory, those who are careless and irreverent would not use them, and those who are reverent would not need them.

The Clergy, it is said, may be reverent, but the communicant may be irreverent, and may crumble bread between his finger and thumb. When that occurs it is rather from thoughtlessness than irreverence, and it is, no doubt, desirable that the people should always receive the Bread in the palms of their hands. We have heard, indeed, of Clergy who refused to place the Bread in the hand of a communicant; but such conduct violated equally the rule of the Church and the rule of Christian charity. "*Take and eat this*" does not

mean, seize this between finger and thumb, but “*receive this,*” and the Rubric distinctly orders the Priest to deliver the Communion to the people “*into their hands.*” The people should be taught the better way, but surely no one should be denied the Bread of Life because the way in which he offered to receive it, either in his fingers or his hand, was not the one approved by the Priest who administered.

Parker, in his Visitation Articles of 1563, required the use of Wafer Bread, but he has no followers in this course; and whenever Sacramental bread is mentioned in subsequent Visitation Articles, the Bishop enquires “*whether the Churchwardens provide against every Communion a sufficient quantity of fine White Bread?*” It is to be hoped that “*fine White Bread*” will be the rule in the future, and that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Ritual Commission, “*Wafers shall not be used.*”

NON-COMMUNICATING ATTENDANCE.

“At the time of the Celebration the Communicants being conveniently placed.”

To these words the Ritual Commissioners propose to add the following:—

“Those who so desire it having had opportunity to withdraw.”

Their reasons for this proposal may be found in the practice thus described as existing in certain churches:—

At the close of the Prayer for the Church Militant, the officiating Priest, regardless of the Rubrical order that “*the communicants be conveniently placed,*” hastens to deliver the exhortation, “*Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come, &c.,*” while the non-communicants are in the act of

retiring. The exhortation is consequently read amidst the confusion arising from persons struggling past each other, and the solemn words of encouragement and warning are lost in the noise of trampling feet, the clashing of chairs, and the shutting of doors. The irreverence which accompanies this portion of the administration is painful to the communicants, and most distressing to the non-communicants, who feel that they are rebuked by the refusal to allow them to depart in peace.

The Lower House of Convocation, on March 2, 1872, concurred in the opinion of the Ritual Commission, and adopted their proposed clause, with the important substitution for the words, "those who so desire," of the words, "*those who do not intend to communicate.*"

Against the clause so proposed in Convocation it has been objected that it would in effect create a new rule, and impose a moral if not an actual restraint on persons who, from whatever cause, may desire to remain. Irrespective of the Divine Service, persons may remain in the church, and may—there as elsewhere, then as at other times—benefit by their own meditations and prayers. No obstacle is opposed to their doing so by the original recommendation of the Ritual Commissioners, which only aimed at securing the liberty of the congregation, and precluding the possibility of irreverent disorder during the performance of any part of the Divine Service.

On July 4, 1873, the Lower House amended their previous resolution, and agreed to the following form of this Rubric before the "Long Exhortation:" "At the time of the celebration of the Holy Communion, *a pause having been made to allow those who so desire to withdraw*, and the communicants being conveniently placed for the receiving of the Holy Sacrament, the Priest shall say this Exhortation."

Different opinions are held as to the period when non-

communicants may most conveniently withdraw—before or after the Prayer for the Church Militant. The words of the Rubric proposed by the Ritual Commission, “*having had opportunity to withdraw,*” or these—“a pause *having been made,*” as agreed by Convocation, pronounce no opinion as to the preferable practice.

A recent writer in favour of non-communicating attendance cites the authority of the early Christian Church, and remarks, “That the primitive Church contented herself with putting before the baptized that reception was the highest act of Communion, while she never insisted on their always receiving when present at *the only public Services then in use.*”

May not this statement (assuming its accuracy) explain the different structure of our own Liturgy?

If the Eucharistic Service in the early Church not only consisted of an office of administration, but provided for the Confession and Absolution of the people, for their instruction by the priest, for the recital of their Creed, for the reading of the Scripture, the offering of praise and supplication and thanksgiving, and if it were not merely the chief but “*the only public Service,*” it would of necessity be attended by all the faithful, and it might become the practice of all the privileged to remain throughout the Celebration, even when exceptionally they did not communicate. But it is admitted that a practice of remaining without receiving (never directly sanctioned) grew so rapidly into a serious abuse, that it provoked indignant reproofs from the Fathers of the Church, many of which, including the famous one of St. Chrysostom, have been transmitted to us. It is notorious also that long before the Reformation the abuse had become the *use*, and “*hearing Mass*” had become the substitute for *Holy Communion*. At the Reformation the rulers of the Church in England re-arranged her Services. They prepared an Eucharistic Service to be, for those admitted to so high a

privilege, the occasion of Sacramental Communion with Christ, and of offering to God the highest praise and most prevailing prayer; but they provided also in the morning and evening Services and in the Litany a means of public worship available for all, meet for the vilest sinner and for the greatest saint, and through which even children might intelligently plead before Almighty God the merits and passion of their Saviour, and might worship "the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world." That the latter part of the Communion Service of the Church is inapplicable to non-communicants is practically admitted by those who have prepared "manuals of devotion to be used at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by such as do not communicate." To discard the Liturgical Service, and substitute individual devotions at such a moment, seems a strange method of joining in public worship, if, indeed, the privilege of doing so were desired. The non-communicant pursuing his private devotions at the time of Celebration has been taught that a special blessing will attend his prayers offered to God at the time of the Christian Sacrifice. Eloquently and forcibly, no doubt, have great Christian teachers, and St. Chrysostom in particular, insisted on the prevailing power of prayer when the "awful sacrifice lies displayed;" but to whose prayer is the prevailing power ascribed? Surely to the prayers alone of those who approach in faith and reverent obedience to receive Him who has called them in the words, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

It has, indeed, been objected that the proposed Rubric is superfluous, inasmuch as "those who desire it" are already at liberty to withdraw "then or at any convenient time."

This argument is irreconcilable with the reproofs addressed to those who do withdraw, but it is noticeable as an admission that the liberty should exist, and is decisive in favour of that liberty being secured.

I urge this conclusion the more anxiously because of the ability and zeal with which "non-communicating attendance" is recommended as a privilege and blessing. I have no wish to provoke a controversy or to point to any writer in particular, but I may present the following words as fairly illustrating the teaching to which I allude:—

"There is a special benefit prepared for those who, without communicating, attend the Holy Sacrament; drawing near to their Lord's Presence, and enjoying the continuance of that intercourse which would otherwise be lost. Such purposes are accomplished by the appointment of a visible form notifying His Presence even though He be Himself invisible. Our Lord desires to be near the soul He loves, and satisfy its cravings by the full enjoyment of fellowship with Himself. And this He effects by means of the actual sight, not of Himself, but of the signs and symbols assuring us that where they are, there He is, there we can hold sure converse with Him." "When we behold those outward signs, Himself is proved to be there. He is there, and the assurance of the visible symbols is enough; it is the certain pledge of our sacramental relation to Him. Even without Communion we may have the satisfaction of feeling that we are near to Him, and that He is near to us. To be near such a Presence, even though we do not actually receive Him, cannot but be fraught with blessing. We can hardly but be stirred to quickened faith and tenderest love as we pray before the consecrated signs of His Presence, His coming near to bless. Nor can we suppose that the soul which has thus approached with its longings of desire and pleadings of its need, can go back from that Presence wholly empty and unchanged."

What has been already said under this head may suggest that language such as this finds no warrant in the structure of our Communion Office; neither (I venture to submit) is it

to be approved upon its intrinsic merits. Teaching of this kind may successfully impart to imaginative minds the very sensations which have been described, and the soul may be trained to see its Lord present in the visible symbols of His Presence—to feel Him near, and to hold with Him that spiritual intercourse the realisation of which is the highest aim of prayer and praise and adoration. But at what cost may these privileges have been purchased? What (under the influence of such training) may be the state of that soul when it ceases to breathe the atmosphere and behold the signs and symbols of Christ's Presence? Is there no danger that the soul, when deprived of the vision of the symbols which it has been taught to regard as the evident assurance of Christ's Presence, may forget that Christ is ever with us, and that our every thought and word and deed are known to Him? And, unguarded by that consciousness, may it not be the more accessible to the influences of the world and sin? If this danger be not imaginary—if it be true that to overvalue the rare, the brief, the extraordinary influence, is to undervalue and weaken the influence which ought to be habitual, constant, and enduring—then, I ask, will not damage have been done by exalting the benefits claimed for the non-communicating “attendant at the Holy Sacrifice,” in depreciation of that clear, lively, and abiding sense of Christ's Presence, which, ceasing neither with the turmoil of the day, nor in the stillness of the night, in the midst of the congregation, or in the solitude of the closet, accompanies the faithful through all the changes and chances of this mortal life?

This is the Presence for which thousands daily pray in the words of Keble's Evening Hymn :—

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live ;
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die.

ELEVATION AND ADORATION.

“ Here the Priest is to take the Paten into his hands.”

In order to appreciate “Wafers” and non-communicating attendance, it is necessary to consider a Ritual development with which they are prominently connected.

In some churches at the mid-day Celebration, or “High Mass,” the congregation are trained to remain, not for the purpose of Communion, but for Adoration. Not only are they not invited to communicate, but they are discouraged and even repelled if they approach the Altar. They are taught, if they desire to communicate, to select an earlier service, and that at the High Celebration their duty is to assist at the Sacrifice, and join in offering Adoration to the Body and Blood of Jesus formally elevated for their sight.

For the guidance of the Clergy in carrying out these recent developments, the “Ritual of the Altar” provides precise instructions. *The celebrating Priest having consecrated, and holding his Host between the thumb and forefinger of both hands, genuflects and worships, and then rising, elevates the Host, while he repeats the words, “Do this in remembrance of Me.”*

With reference to the practices thus inculcated it is humbly submitted that there is no authority for them in the Communion Service of the English Church. Christ’s Sacraments are to be used in the way and for the purposes he has ordained, and in no other. In the Holy Eucharist, a Commemorative Sacrifice, Adoration and Communion are all combined; and it must be a perversion of the Sacrament which arbitrarily seeks through its medium to offer Sacrifice and localised Adoration, while rejecting the Communion which is the especial purpose of the institution.

The legal proceedings which have been directed against the practice of Elevation were apparently based on the assumption that all Elevation was illegal; and the defence, with equal lack of logic, aimed at justifying Elevation at any time and in any degree, by proving that some Elevation was indispensable.

A close adherence to the Rubrical directions appended to the Consecration Prayer would result in a series of ceremonial acts closely coinciding with those required by the most ancient Liturgy, that of St. James.

In the Liturgy of St. James we find the following:—

“Who in the night in which He was betrayed (1) (*here the Priest takes the Bread into his hands*) taking bread into his holy and spotless and pure and immortal hands, and looking up to heaven, and showing it to Thee His God and Father, He gave thanks and hallowed and (2) brake, and gave to His apostles and disciples, saying (3), Take, eat, this is my Body which is broken for you, and is given for the remission of sins.”

“*Then he takes the cup,*” &c.

With the preceding the Liturgy of the Church of England is in perfect harmony; thus—

“Who in the same night that He was betrayed (1) (*here the Priest is to take the Paten into his hands*) took bread; and when He had given thanks (2) (*and here to break the Bread*) He brake it; and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat (3) (*and here to lay his hand upon all the Bread*), this is my body which is given for you—do this in remembrance of Me.”

“Likewise after supper,” &c.

Upon these Rubrics the Rev. C. S. Grueber observes, in his reply to Dr. Heurtley—“We have here three directions given. The first direction is as distinct from the second as the second is from the third. Before the second can be

complied with, the Paten must be replaced upon the Holy Table, and the hands must be released. Then, and not till then, are the hands free to 'break the Bread.' It must be added that the act of breaking the Bread requires the use of both hands, for to use one hand only is not convenient."

A Priest of the Church of England, when he "takes the Paten into his hands," may follow the precedent of St. James's Liturgy; he may "look up to heaven and show the Bread to God," without adding to or deviating from the Rubrical directions of his own Church.

A prohibition of all Elevation of the Elements—that Elevation included which is involved in the Priest "taking the Paten into his hands," and which he mentally constitutes "a showing to the Father," would therefore be an absurdity which would be shattered by its collision with the Rubric.

As with the Paten so with the Cup—the Rubrics supply directions quite definite, if literally obeyed.

"Likewise after Supper He (1) (*Here he is to take the cup into his hands*)* took the cup, and, when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this (2) (*and here to lay his hand upon every vessel (be it chalice or flagon) in which there is any wine to be consecrated*) is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins: do this as oft as ye shall drink it in remembrance of Me."

In these Rubrics, as in the preceding, the first direction is distinct from that which follows, and the hands must be released from Elevating the Cup, by replacing it upon the Holy Table, before they can be laid upon every vessel in which there is wine to be consecrated. With the consecra-

* Not hand, as usually printed, but hands, as in the MS. copy attached to the Act of Parliament. Hands is evidently in agreement with the Rubric prefixed to the Consecration Prayer, requiring the Priest "to take the cup into his hands."

tion of the Wine the manual acts are completed, the Rubrics supplying no sanction to any Elevation of either the Bread or Wine subsequent to their consecration.

And yet we have been told that "the Body and Blood of Jesus being verily upon the Altar, the Priest formally elevates and raises them for the sight and adoration of the people."

English Churchmen are now enjoined by some of their modern teachers "to assist in offering the Sacrifice," *i.e.* by attending the celebration of the Holy Communion without communicating. In the Eucharist there is (*a*) a sacrifice, in the offering of our alms and oblations; (*b*) a sacrifice, "reasonable, holy, and lively," in the offering of ourselves, our souls, and bodies, unto God; and there is (*c*) a commemorative sacrifice, even the commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ; of the one oblation of Himself once offered, pleaded in the Consecration Prayer. Only as a pleading of Christ's sacrifice does the expression "offering the sacrifice" seem admissible; and while it is true that Christ's sacrifice is especially pleaded in the Eucharistic service, it is true also that it is so pleaded only by those who participate in the whole Eucharistic act, including the most essential portion of it, the reception of Christ's Body and Blood. "Do this in remembrance of Me," are words applied specifically by some to the act of elevation; they really apply to the observance entire of the sacred feast which Christ instituted, and in which "as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup we do show the Lord's death till He come."

The divergencies of doctrine on the subject of the Eucharist within the Church of England would be materially contracted if the main distinction between the teaching of the Church of Rome and that of the Anglican and Primitive Church were kept steadily in view. That the Bread and Wine are, after consecration, the Body and Blood of Christ

is affirmed of course by the Church of Christ everywhere, but the distinction between Roman and Anglican doctrine lies in this—Rome declares that after consecration the substance of the Bread and Wine has vanished, and that they then exist only in appearance; that is to say, a miracle has been effected upon the material substances of the Bread and Wine, and a miracle, moreover, wherein the asserted change is not confirmed by, but is refuted by the evidence of the senses. The Church of England requires a reasonable faith. A matter of faith may be beyond the cognisance of the senses, but cannot exist in contradiction to their testimony, and the Roman doctrine of Transubstantiation must be rejected as involving a miracle differing from every miracle that ever was wrought, as being disproved by all the evidence that can be applied to it by our bodily faculties and our mental perception.

The Church of England accepts without hesitation the words of Our Lord, and believes that in the consecrated Bread and Wine His Body and Blood are verily and indeed given, taken, and received. She believes that as in Holy Baptism the Holy Spirit is supernaturally communicated to the regenerated child, so in the Holy Eucharist Christ, supernaturally and spiritually, is communicated to the faithful.

Both the Church of England and the Church of Rome own Christ present in the Sacrament: but the Church of England finds Christ present through a spiritual operation, and the Church of Rome seeks Christ present through a material miracle.

VESTMENTS.

So bewildering and contradictory are the arguments and judgments of the Privy Council, that it is difficult to draw from them any certain conclusions as to the present legality of such Ornaments of the Church and of the Ministers thereof as existed by Parliamentary authority in the second year of King Edward VI.

The legality, however, of the Vestments of 1549 is not the sole, or, in my judgment, the principal consideration at the present moment. Time, and the change which time has wrought in the feeling of Churchmen generally, must be considered; and although no one could wish that, if neglect and irreverence have led to a degradation of the Service of God's House, that degradation should be stereotyped, yet it cannot be unwise to examine whether the prevalent feeling upon particular points may not constitute an adequate reason for granting to the *status quo* the privilege of possession, and testing its claim before it is summarily rejected. Time in the course of two centuries placed custom and law in apparent antagonism upon two important points. The law had prescribed that the Table should stand "table-wise" in the body of the church or chancel; custom placed it "altar-wise" at the east end of the chancel. The law prescribed the use of the Vestments of the time of Edward VI.; custom banished the use of those Vestments so completely that they were practically unknown a few years back. Evidently, neither law nor custom can be allowed to rule absolutely; and happily neither of these points is of a nature which precludes an adjustment by mutual concession, without sacrificing either principle or dignity. But what should be the character of the adjustment as regards Vestments? The

answer will be suggested by the notoriety of the fact that it has been not the name, the texture, or the form of the Vestment, but its colour which originally excited surprise, suspicion, and dislike. Clergy, thoroughly loyal in disposition and staid in character, have yet expressed their opinion that there would be a fitness in a specific vesture being sanctioned for the use of the celebrant at the Holy Communion. But, without either affirming or denying this proposition, I repeat the suggestion which I made in the Ritual Commission—Let the “Ornaments Rubric” remain unaltered, but let this be added :—“*Nevertheless it is expedient that for the greater uniformity in ecclesiastical Vestments the Ministers shall be restrained to the use of a white vesture, provided that upon such vesture they may wear a scarf or stole.*” The sentiment of those who desire a specific vesture would be satisfied, and the vesture would cease to offend those who violently resent the appearance of gaily coloured and gorgeously decorated garments if worn by ministers of the Church of England.

The popular aversion to coloured Vestments I believe to be sincere, deeply rooted, and easily explicable. Englishmen are quite as conservative in religious as in other matters; they dislike novelties apart even from their meaning, but they dislike coloured Vestments because they remind them of the Vestments used in the Roman Church. I cannot think this dislike unreasonable, nor can I heed the remonstrances of those Ultra Ritualists who, on this and kindred subjects, deprecate any step which can in appearance widen the breach between us and the Roman Catholic Church. While Rome maintains and constantly multiplies doctrines irreconcilable with the truth once for all delivered to the saints, and consequently antagonistic to the principles of religious liberty and national loyalty, we could not (even if she assented) hold communion with her; and to affect an

outward conformity in Ritual while at variance in doctrine would be interpreted as an act of weakness, and in no degree promote the reunion of Christendom.

CONCLUSION.

The contention about Ritual has been so sharp, and has been carried on with such eagerness, that even the seat of justice has not escaped the infection of partisanship, and judgments have borne the appearance of arguments ingeniously applied to the support of conclusions predetermined for the satisfaction of a popular cry.

The arguments founded upon "Omission" afford on either side remarkable instances of extravagant advocacy. On one side it has been laid down that the directions contained in the present Prayer Book must be strictly obeyed, and that no omission or addition can be permitted. On the other side it has been contended that the Prayer Book is no ceremonial guide, and that every pre-reformation ceremonial, act, or thing not specifically forbidden is now legal, if not obligatory.

An attempt to carry out either of these contradictory rules would lead to most inconvenient and ridiculous results. Neither the existing law nor custom can be permitted singly to determine the future conditions of Church Ritual. Where law is obsolete and unsuitable, it should be abrogated; where custom is the embodiment of neglect, it should be corrected.

The Prayer Book is not a Directorium; it contains directions as to Ritual, but very much is left to be supplied by tradition. When, however, it professes to prescribe ceremonial acts (as in the Rubrics of the Consecration

Prayer), its directions must be taken to be positive and exclusive. A Directorium is certainly needed, but a Directorium loyally adapted to the system of the English Church, and not copied from the formularies of Rome or from those of the Pre-reformation Church in this country. Such a work, sanctioned by authority, would be of great utility in restoring the uniformity of Public Worship; but its compilation must be a thing in the future. The duty at this time committed to Convocation is one ranging over a more confined area, but not at all less important in its character—that of suggesting the means of allaying the dissensions which paralyse the energies and thwart the influence of the Church. The issues of the pending crisis may be momentous, certainly they are such as to call forth our earnest prayers that Convocation may be guided by wisdom from above to conclusions favourable to the future stability and peace of our Church and nation.

